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The Juggler



VOLUME V ISSUE I MARCH 2009

Staying in Touch

As I write this, our national economy is confronting some grimly historic challenges, with painful cutbacks, deep revenue losses and chronic uncertainty plaguing almost every industry imaginable. From real estate to retail, banking to bricklaying, American businesses have seen massive drops in sales, employment, investment and consumer confidence.

But you're mistaken if you think this is the perfect time to cut back on the old marketing spend. Now, more than ever, your consumers need to hear from you. They need to know that your products and services remain as vital and affordable to them as possible. They need to know that you're redoubling your efforts to reach out to them.

Perhaps you may have lost some market share. But there are still plenty of consumers who depend on your products and services, and you're not exactly filling them with confidence when you limit or sever communications. Truth is, many companies gain a competitive advantage during tough times. Smart CMOs use economic downturns to separate themselves from the pack, winning over skeptical consumers and diminishing rivals along the way.

As always, *Deliver*® is here with timely stories and information designed to help you achieve these successes. Among the articles in this issue are some pieces that take a long, hard look at the current economic turmoil and how marketers can not only survive, but thrive during the uncertainty.

One of the most actionable pieces is our straightforwardly titled "How to Beat the Recession" (p. 22). For this story, we sat down with Andrew Razeghi, a lecturer at Northwestern University and author of a recent study, "Innovating through Recession." Razeghi outlines the successful formulas companies have used during a recession and shows how ramping up customer communications during economic turmoil can distinguish corporate winners from the losers.

In keeping with this theme, we also have a think piece from David Shoenfeld, the senior vice president of mailing services at the United States Postal Service,® about rethinking the value of simple ROI (p. 9). Too often, marketers become obsessed with being able to show dollar-for-dollar returns from campaigns. But as Shoenfeld points out, we really ought to be thinking about how well our dollars spent help us achieve our overall marketing goals. Failure to make these considerations, he says, can lead to some serious misperceptions about the real effectiveness of your marketing strategies — at a time when you can least afford to sink more money into fool's gold.

In addition to these stories, we've also got our usual assortment of insightful case studies and expert advice addressing your marketing concerns.

Of course, as you might've already noticed, there have been some significant changes. We've added more visuals, such as our "See Here" informational graphic. Our case studies are now accompanied by an informational box that distills the most relevant campaign data. This way, you can know immediately what a campaign involved, how it performed and whether you should consider something similar. (We welcome your feedback, too, so reach out to us at delivermagazine.com to opine about our new look.)

Our communications efforts are growing, becoming more robust despite the economic uncertainty. We strongly encourage you, our readers, to follow suit.



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Cat Moriarty, Editor

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BODY PRINTED ON RECYCLED PAPER WITH 20% POSTCONSUMER WASTE



ON THE COVER: ILLUSTRATION BY JOHN DUNIVANT



“People still trust what they read on paper much more than they trust what they see in digital media. Direct marketers have a chance to capitalize on this trust by making direct mail more compelling and innovative.

— Andrew Razeghi, Northwestern University lecturer and author. See story on page 22.

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A BRIEF LOOK AT SOME BIG ISSUES IN DIRECT MAIL



MATCH MAKERS

Comprehensive database makes reaching hard-to-find customers easier

Prospecting

As consumers unplug from the nation's land-line telecommunications grid, it's harder for direct marketers to use reverse listings to generate accurate mailing lists. According to the latest FCC estimates, about 11.3 million U.S. households — more than 10 percent of all households in the country — are wireless only.

SmartMatch, a database from information-services provider Telematch Inc., helps businesses uncover current mailing addresses for these difficult-to-find consumers. It uses data from public sources and telecom companies to locate those elusive potential consumers with wireless, mobile, cable and voice over Internet protocol (VOIP) telephony.

“Telecommunications data are more reliable than self-reported data in gaining the most accurate, current postal address,” says Peg Kuman, CEO of Telematch. “Accurate data cannot always ensure the right outcomes — companies also need the right processes and analytics — but without accurate data, all the other parts fail.” — Vicki Powers

GETTY IMAGES/INSET: MATT BARNES



Promote Control

DMA strengthens efforts to give mail recipients more choices

List Hygiene

As part of its ongoing effort to enhance consumer control over marketing mail and e-mail, the Direct Marketing Association has created an enhanced mail-preference-suppression initiative, DMAchoice. The technology enables consumers to go online to opt into or out of mail based on company, brand or entire categories.

The effort also is a key reason why DMA officials insist that Do Not Mail legislation is unnecessary. In 2008, 12 state legislatures had 15 Do Not Mail bills under consideration, including seven states that carried bills over from 2007 and five dealing with newly introduced proposals.

The DMA has expressed concern that the bills could threaten the more than \$702 billion in increased sales that advertising mail contributed to the U.S. economy in 2008.

“DMAchoice is about empowering consumers to identify what they like and do not like,” says Senny Boone, DMA's senior vice president, corporate & social responsibility. “It allows marketing professionals to do their jobs more efficiently, and that's good for both consumers and marketers.” For more information, visit dmachoice.org. — Chris Caggiano

Green Stamp

How labels help push eco-friendly mailings

Environment

Is your paper sustainable? And do customers know? The Sustainable Forestry Initiative (SFI), a Virginia nonprofit, is among numerous organizations that provide marketers with labels for envelopes and paper to promote a company's use of materials from well-managed forests.

Such concerns are increasingly important to mail recipients, says Jason Metnick, director of market access and product labeling at SFI: “Until recently, not many people have been asking about where the wood fiber in the paper product comes from. That's changing.”

SFI has certified more than 150 million acres practicing sustainable forestry practices and provides a label to identify paper products drawn from those forests. — Vicki Powers



Pinpoint Accuracy

New digital tool has marketers improving their aim

Technology

As you plan your mailing strategy, wouldn't it be great if you could just handpick the exact folks you wish to target? A new interactive mapping tool, MapMail, may just give you the power you're looking for. Developed by QuantumDigital, MapMail technology — part of a complete direct mail fulfillment platform — finds the addresses in a selected target zone that match the demographic profile of prospects.

Users identify their ideal prospect type through a detailed list of demographic characteristics such as age, income and professional title. Users then “draw” on a digital map, manipulating points on the map to define their desired mailing area. Once MapMail zeroes in on addresses in the target area that match the demographic profile, marketers can integrate these addresses into prospecting databases.

“MapMail decreases waste because you are selecting your exact prospect profile from a demographic set,” says Jamie Klemcke, director of marketing at QuantumDigital. “Rather than blanketing a ZIP™ code with your message, it is reaching the correct target — which is important in the current market downturn.” — Vicki Powers

Pushing the Pull

Despite increased consumer control over marketing messages, brands must still embrace the hard sell.

There are some things that we all know to be true, right? Lemmings drown themselves en masse, chocolate gives teenagers zits, births increase under a full moon, red cars get the most speeding tickets. And, in marketing, everyone knows that when people can tell you're trying to sell them something, they don't buy. Right?

Wrong. Beware what everyone knows. The above "facts" are all false. We'll leave you to look up lemmings, acne, birth rates and traffic statistics on your own. Meanwhile, let's go ahead and debunk that silly notion about marketers trying not to look like they are selling something.

Imagine two salespeople, both presentable and charming. Salesperson A shows up at your door, engages you in conversation, mentions the product a few times and avoids directly stating a purpose for the visit. Salesperson B shows up, states a purpose for the visit, presents specific products designed to solve specific problems and encourages you to buy. If you were a sales manager, whom would you hire?

If our thought experiment hasn't convinced you to hire (and to run marketing campaigns that resemble) Salesperson B, let's move on to some harder evidence.

Quick — what's the most common thing that successful salespeople do, and that unsuccessful ones fail to do? If you said "ask

for the sale" or, in large corporate transactions, "advance the sale," give yourself a point. You'll never hear successful salespeople worry about letting it be known that a sale is afoot. You will frequently hear it from unsuccessful ones. Good marketing does what good salespeople do.

And which — a direct response or a brand marketer — is more likely to know what kind of advertising produces the most sales? If you chose the direct marketer, give yourself another point. From total sales, recall scores and other measures, brand marketers can infer campaign results, but can't reliably quantify them. Direct marketers can, though. The nature of direct response ensures knowing what works, when and by how much.

Of course, many insist that this is all wrong, that in this age of digital video recorders and other evidence of increased consumer control over the marketing message, you need to eschew overt selling. Get out of the customer's face, some suggest.

We wholeheartedly disagree. Ongoing direct response tests in all media — broadcast, print, direct mail and online — continue to show that the time-honored techniques of clearly showcased benefits, compelling incentives, urging customers to buy and making response easy still work best.

I'm all for getting consumers' "permission" to market to them when necessary. And I'm certainly for affording the customer the



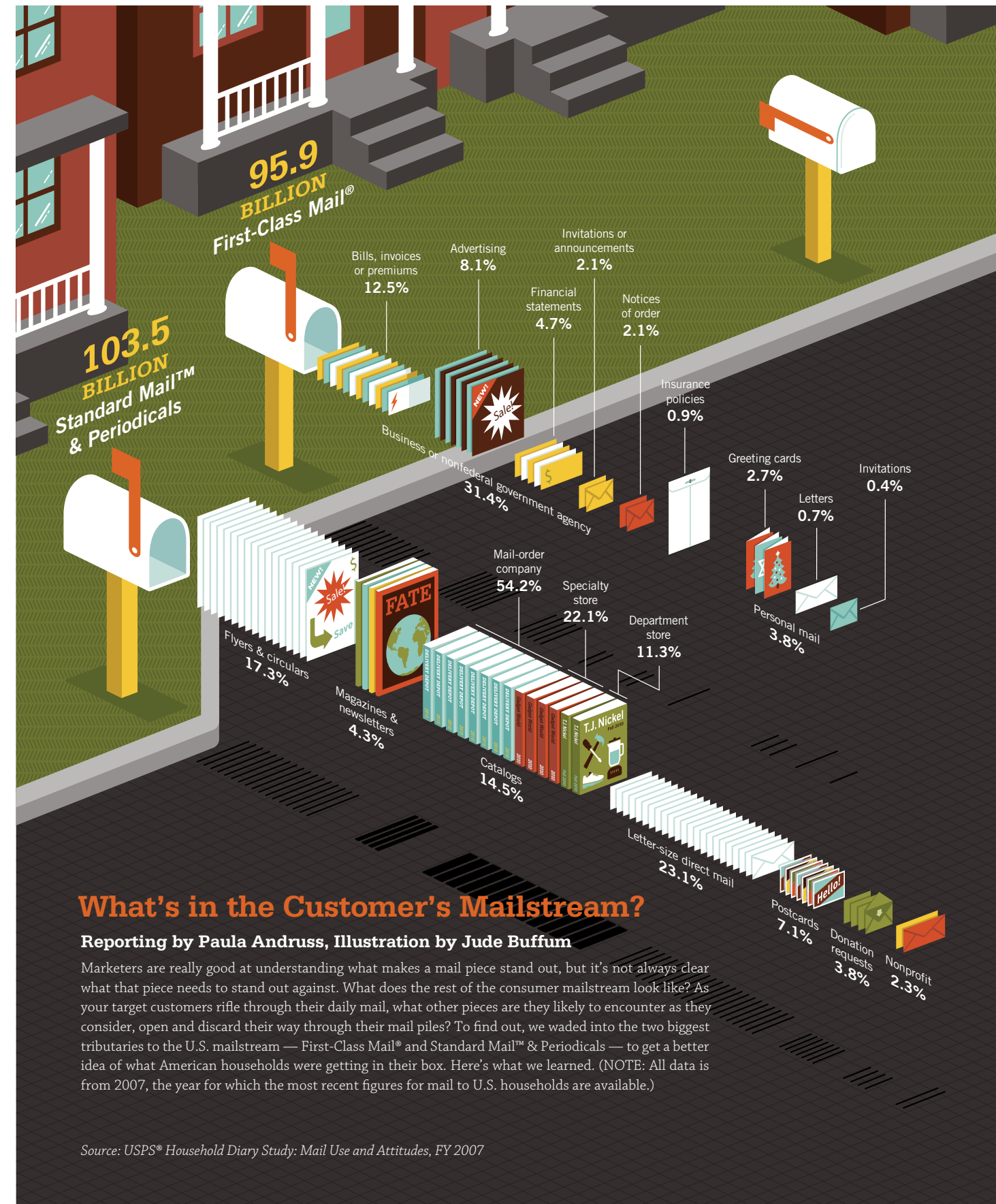
utmost respect. But don't soft-peddle vague rhetoric to consumers. You're more likely to raise concerns if consumers aren't sure what you want. Honestly, do you think your subtlety is fooling anyone? The moment a customer visits your store or Web site, watches or reads your ad, e-mail or direct mail piece, it is tacitly agreed that the customer is buying and you are selling. So give them something of value for their time and attention. (Not unlike a certain direct marketing magazine we're far too humble to name.) Of course, some marketers will always believe that consumers don't buy if you overtly sell.

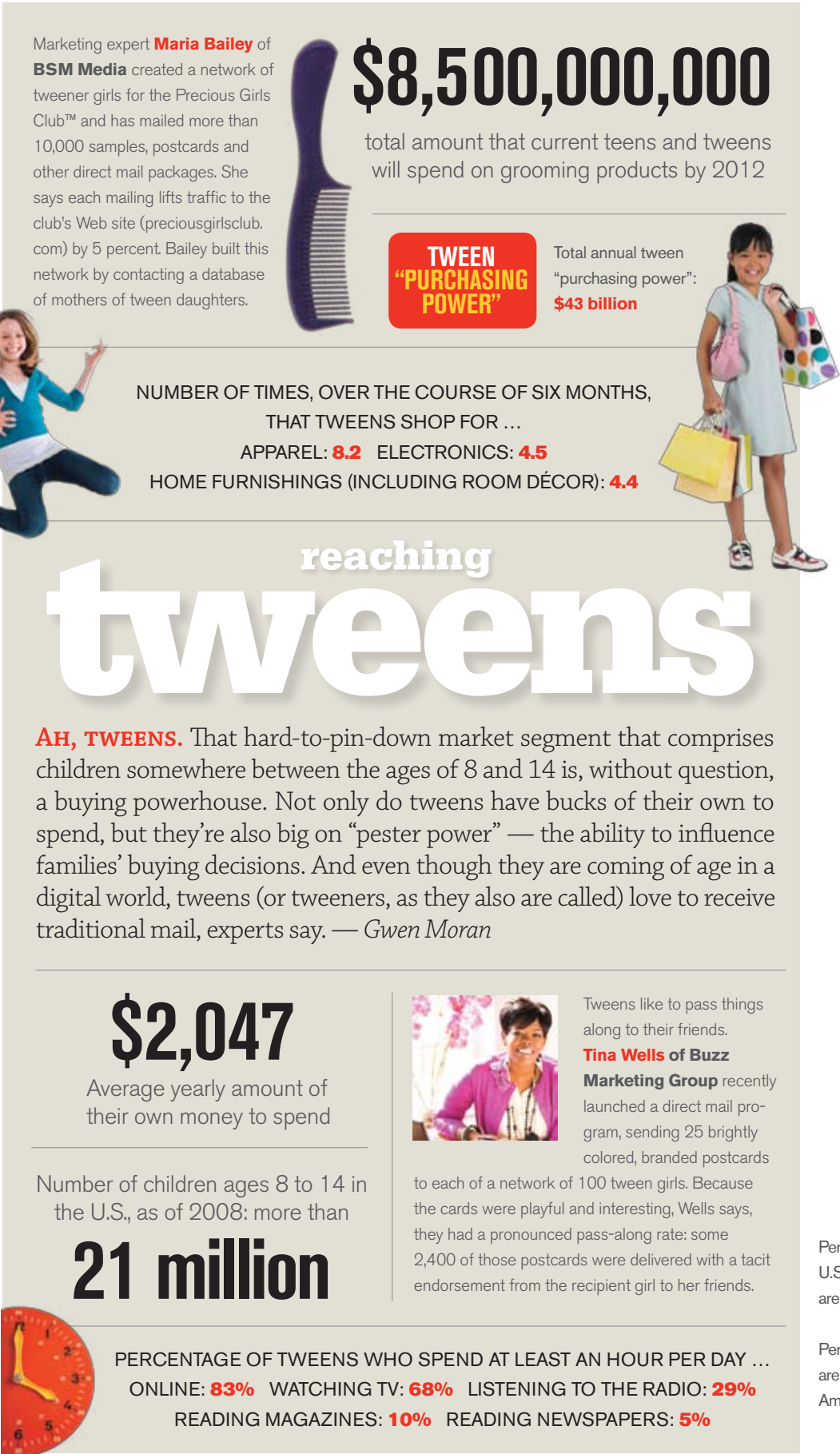
Why? Perhaps, as with tales of lemmings, zits, babies and red cars,

it's natural not to question common beliefs. Perhaps people mistakenly confuse selling with badgering or pressuring. Or perhaps the myth is plain comfortable. "I could never sell for a living," many avow. The false assurance that subtlety works lets people dwell within their comfort zone, where, unknowingly, they sell less, but feel more secure. Ironically, many of those people end up making a living as so-called "experts" creating marketing that supposedly sells.

But to deny the power of strong selling — of getting up close to the consumer and saying unabashedly that you want them to buy what you're offering — is to embrace a costly myth. [a](#)

GETTY IMAGES / RICHARD SCHNEIDER





JOSEPH JAFFE

Bridging the Gap

Direct mail isn't just for pushing offers anymore. It can also help along your branding efforts.



I'm not a direct marketer by any stretch of the imagination and, to be honest, despite my immense respect for the industry, I can't say I've ever completely understood it. Of course, I can't say I feel any closer connections to the ephemeral, esoteric and ambiguous brand-marketing industry either these days.

Perhaps that's part of the problem. Two industries on opposite ends of the spectrum, and with extreme and arguably mutually exclusive traits, become very hard to unify. Whereas brand marketing is all about vague and conceptual storytelling, direct marketing is head-down, no-nonsense, nuts and bolts. Whereas brand marketing suffers from a desperate need for a reality check, direct marketing has a distinctly cold and lifeless demeanor.

Could direct mail bridge that gap? Yes. Despite what we may think, direct has potential in terms of both response and branding.

I've always looked at brand marketing as at best a conversation starter and at worst an uninvited intruder, sticking its foot in the doors to our lives, homes and attention spans. In a largely analog space, brand marketing is a constant barrage of push communication, with limited interactivity, utility and fulfillment.

That's where direct mail comes in. Isn't this the perfect opportunity to pass the baton to an inherently more efficient, data-driven process,

Joseph Jaffe is president and chief interruptor of crayon, an advisory group. He is also author of the recently published Join the Conversation.

Whereas brand marketing is all about vague and conceptual storytelling, direct marketing is head-down, no-nonsense, nuts and bolts.

one that intimately understands how to qualify and convert interest and intent?

On the flip side, direct mail suffers from its own problems, not the least of which is the same one-way approach to customer communications. Seems that the industry is so focused on acquisition that it loses perspective of the soft sell that it takes to prep a customer to buy.

What if both industries came together, partnered up to meet their leads halfway? It's the kind of integration that is so sorely lacking in the marketplace today. Instead of connecting the dots between various touch points, we just attempt to make sure that the direct mailer has the same color coordination as the glossy print or flashy 30-second spots.

But why not try another approach? Why not put the "prospect" in the driver's seat to unify two industries that, up until now, either cancelled each other out or went their separate ways on parallel, not intersecting, paths?

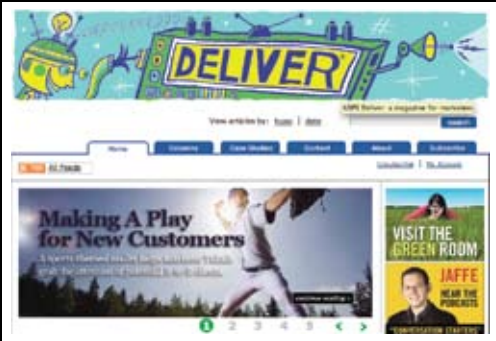
Indeed, when explicit consumer permission is involved, a "lead" or "prospect" is likely no longer a faceless statistic or number — but an engaged and valuable customer. **d**

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Multi-Sell Organisms

How mailing a self-sustaining ecosphere helped Anthem National Accounts boost its b-to-b business. **By Samar Farah**

Early in 2008, benefits administrators at large corporations across the United States unwrapped an unusual gift that arrived in the mail: an ecosphere — a glass globe containing self-sustaining shrimp and algae, with the message “Simple ... is more complex than it looks.” The source of this generosity? Anthem National Accounts, a division of Blue Cross and Blue Shield.

The company’s “Ecosphere” campaign, which won a silver ECHO Award at the 2008 DMA Conference, was designed to call attention to Anthem’s efforts to make its services more user-friendly. And since health insurance is regarded as anything but simple by most benefits managers and customers — who are often bogged down by cryptic medical bills and impenetrable bureaucratic processes — the ecosphere hit just the right note.

Prior to launching the campaign, Anthem conducted interviews with target groups. Officials found that, although users appreciate large doctor networks and innovative offerings, they really crave a health insurance plan that’s easier to use.

So, to set itself apart in an undifferentiated space, Anthem began to focus heavily on user ease and accessibility. For example, the company initiated a rigorous training system for its customer service representatives so that now, when customers call with questions, only Anthem agents who are prepared to deal with a variety of issues pick up the phone, eliminating the hassle of transferring calls and the need to speak with multiple reps. The company also took steps to make its online experience smoother for the end user.

The company’s next challenge was to communicate those

As the campaign’s promotional packaging announced, ecospheres may appear simple, but below the surface complex biological processes are at work — much like Anthem’s new image of a simple-to-use service supported by complex, comprehensive offerings.

changes to benefits managers. “We have spent a lot of time, research and effort to make ourselves easier to engage with,” says Kelly Colbert, director of marketing. “The purpose of this campaign was to herald that message.”

The “Ecosphere” campaign targeted benefits administrators at corporations with 5,000 employees or more. But Colbert knew it would be no easy feat cutting through the clutter to reach this audience. “These names are on every insurance carrier’s target list,” she says. In other words, yet another beseeching e-mail would hardly do the job.

After several rounds of brainstorming with its agency, Wikreate, Anthem landed on the ecosphere metaphor. Ecospheres are enclosed, balanced ecosystems: the shrimp, algae and bacteria sustain each other in filtered water. With a little natural or artificial light, the ecosphere will easily go on regenerating, good as new, for two years or longer.

As the campaign’s promotional packaging announced, ecospheres may appear simple, but below the surface complex biological processes are at work — much like Anthem’s new image of a simple-to-use service supported by complex, comprehensive offerings.

In addition to the glass globe, the mailing included a brochure explaining the history and function of an ecosphere and information about Anthem and the campaign’s microsite.

The glass globes had the added benefit of being aesthetically attractive and soothing to look at. Colbert says the company received e-mails and phone calls from recipients who wanted to express their appreciation. Anthem also heard from administrators who weren’t on the target list but caught wind of the campaign and were nonetheless hoping to get their own ecosphere.

But the real payoff for Colbert was in the actual response rate. The campaign started in January 2008 and ran for about seven weeks. In its first four weeks, the campaign generated response from about 22 percent of recipients — more than 580 percent greater than the average response for dimensional mail. The average time that respondents spent on the microsite was 3.5 minutes, with 50 percent of respondents leaving testimonials about the microsite’s video.

Colbert also credits a carefully researched target list for its successful response rate. Prior to the campaign launch, Anthem conducted extensive outbound telemarketing to expand its data on prospective clients. “With high-impact dimensional mail,” Colbert urges, “you want to spend the extra money to vet the list.”



- Dubbed “Simple is more complex than it looks,” the Anthem campaign generated an early response rate of 22 percent, more than 580 percent greater than the average response for dimensional mail.
- Campaign respondents were driven to an accompanying Web site, where they spent an average of 3.5 minutes.
- About half of all respondents left a testimonial on the site.



Despite the positive results and the fact that Anthem has conducted dimensional mail campaigns in the past, Colbert admits this campaign was not an easy sell initially. Senior managers were concerned about the ecosphere’s portability — would it remain intact en route? They also wondered if the concept effectively imparted Anthem’s message.

Anthem National Accounts sent ecospheres (above) to influential benefits managers. The mailings included information about Anthem and directed targets to an accompanying microsite for more info.

Colbert says the creative team answered the first concern by designing safe packaging specifically for the glass globe. The second concern was resolved, according to Colbert, when Wikreate sent senior Anthem managers samples of the ecosphere. Once they saw the globe, they were convinced that the ecosphere could both grab attention and impart their marketing message.

And while some dimensional mail efforts can be pricey, Colbert says the little glass globe “was relatively not that expensive,” pointing out that ecospheres are fairly common in science- and nature-themed gift shops nationwide.

In fact, for Colbert, high-impact dimensional direct mail was the obvious channel, given the difficulty in snaring the attention of benefits managers and the nature of the campaign’s “simplicity” metaphor. An electronic image of an ecosphere or even a printed illustration of an ecosphere would not have had nearly the same effect, she argues.

“You can only create that disruptive experience by harnessing the potential of high-impact direct mail,” Colbert says. [a](#)





BRINGING THE PAIN

BY BRUCE BRITT PHOTOGRAPH BY AARON GOODMAN

THE WWE USES A HEAVYWEIGHT CAMPAIGN TO TIGHTEN ITS STRANGLEHOLD ON SPORTS ENTERTAINMENT

Throughout its history, World Wrestling Entertainment Inc. (WWE) has never been accused of subtlety. The incubator for superstars with nicknames like “The Body” and “the Rock,” WWE has evolved into an entertainment empire built on action-packed drama and some of the most intense multimedia marketing in American pop culture (see sidebar).

But the conglomerate exceeded even its own reputation for the unexpected with a 2008 mail campaign that spotlighted a curious new promotions star — commonly known as “the fridge.”

To trumpet the premiere of WWE’s new high-definition TV programming initiative, the Connecticut-based entertainment organization began courting programmers and marketers at large cable and satellite providers by mailing out actual branded mini refrigerators filled with ice packs. And in launching perhaps the heaviest direct-mail campaign in entertainment history, the industry-leading WWE also reminded observers that integrated direct marketing is often as crucial to maintaining brand dominance as it is to attaining it in the first place.

The effort began taking shape in late 2007, when Lisa Richards, WWE vice president of affiliate marketing, and her team began thinking of ways to underscore their claim that the HD technology enhanced the WWE fan experience. “We came up with the pun ‘So Real It Hurts,’” Richards recalls. “Basically, we wanted to communicate that our programming would enhance the overall viewing experience, that HD offers fans the actual experience of being in the ring.”

When the marketers learned that the company had 50 mini refrigerators idling in a warehouse, the idea shifted into high gear. Rallying around the freshly minted “So Real It Hurts” slogan, Richards and team collaborated with WWE’s creative department, branding the iceboxes with logos emblazoned with a red and white cross. To drive home the point about the HD viewing experience, the jet-black refrigerators were each crammed with



CAMPAIGN SYNOPSIS

- **NAME OF CAMPAIGN:** “So Real It Hurts”
- **VARIOUS MEDIA USED:** Direct mail
- **LENGTH OF CAMPAIGN:** About one month, running throughout January 2008
- **COST OF CAMPAIGN:** \$50,000
- **NUMBER OF PIECES MAILED:** 50 branded refrigerators, 100 boxed media kits
- **OBJECTIVE:** To encourage broadcast providers to sign up for the WWE HDTV programming initiative
- **IMPACT:** The direct mail B2B advertising campaign earned WWE the Gold Mark award from the Cable & Telecommunications Association for Marketing.

INSET: © 2008 WORLD WRESTLING ENTERTAINMENT, INC. ALL RIGHTS RESERVED.



OUT COLD: The mini fridges and gel packs emphasized the power of WWE HD programming.

75 8-by-6-inch ice packs, all the better for recipients to nurse their virtual “wounds” after viewing hours of exciting WWE HD programming. The outlandish effort was topped off by a promotional letter that comically stated the intent of the campaign: “These are dangerous times for the millions of WWE Fans. As we make final preparations for our High Definition transition ... it has come to our attention the superior resolution, better picture quality, digital surround sound and smoother motion of WWE in HD creates an enhanced viewing experience so intense and so real it hurts.”

WWE also devised a complementary phase of the “So Real It Hurts” campaign that sent branded media kits featuring only the ice packs and promo letter. The 9-1/2 by 7-1/2-inch boxed kits were mailed to 100 additional VIPs on WWE’s distribution list.

Shipped to their respective targets in January 2008, the iceboxes — 36 inches high, 20 inches wide and 23 inches deep — drew a powerful and almost immediate response. “Oh my God — everyone called,” Richards says. “You’re sitting there in the office — and you get a refrigerator delivered.” The campaign eventually earned the WWE marketing team the prestigious Gold

Mark Award from the Cable & Telecommunications Association for Marketing, along with an excellence in marketing award from a top publication in the cable industry.

The “So Real It Hurts” campaign underscores the seriousness with which WWE conducts its marketing and promotional affairs. Despite the company’s long standing as an entertainment industry leader, the franchise steadfastly refuses to rest on its laurels. Under the leadership of chairman Vincent K. McMahon and CEO Linda McMahon, World Wrestling Entertainment has forged a cradle-to-grave marketing strategy aimed at cultivating everyone from the youngest wrestling aficionados to the grayest action lovers. Producing most of its content in-house, WWE uses a range of channels to get people to attend live events, and tune into its weekly programming, including online/broadband, mobile, branded merchandise and more (see sidebar).

Along with mail campaigns such as “So Real It Hurts,” the company also prints two custom publications, *WWE Magazine* and *WWE Kids*, that target a loyal audience ranging from ages 6 to 54. According to MediaMark Research & Intelligence, *WWE Magazine* ranks among

MIXING IT UP WITH WWE

Taking the measure of the wrestling franchise’s multimedia reach

It’s the aggressive enterprise that eliminated all competitors to become the last league standing. With 2007 gross earnings of \$485.7 million — including a coffer-bursting \$52.1 million profit — World Wrestling Entertainment Inc. is a moneymaking heavyweight that reels in fans through a variety of media, including online/broadband, video, publishing, mobile and branded merchandise. “Our strategy is to capitalize on the significant operating leverage of our business model through the distribution of this intellectual property across existing media platforms, as well as new and emerging distribution platforms,” says WWE VP Affiliate Marketing, Lisa Richards. Or, as she succinctly puts it later, “We have our hands in everything.” So just how extensive is the WWE’s presence in various marketing channels? Let’s explore ...

publications with the youngest readership. Though nearly two-thirds of consumer magazines posted flat or lower circulation in 2008, BPA Worldwide reported that *WWE Magazine* posted an eye-popping 12.7-percent gain in distribution. In addition, *WWE Kids* was recently named one of the hottest new titles of 2008 by one leading publishing industry magazine.

Furthermore, WWE says, the recently launched kids title already boasts an estimated readership of 375,000, with its companion Web site WWEKIDS.com delivering more than 6 million impressions a month. “We know kids are watching our products, so we wanted to give them a product that was more applicable for them,” Richards says of the child-friendly initiatives.

WWE also does slightly more traditional mailings, too, as part of its overall integrated

- **Live Events**
WWE’s three brands — touring live events including RAW, SmackDown and ECW — allow WWE to play numerous domestic markets and leverage international demand. In the third quarter of 2008, WWE held 89 live events, entertaining nearly half a million fans at an average ticket price of \$42.66.
- **Television**
Combining high-impact competition with eye-popping production values, domestic cable and broadcast programs including Monday Night RAW and Friday Night SmackDown reach more than 14.8 million

- viewers during the average week, while annual pay-per-view events like Royal Rumble and WrestleMania have placed WWE among the world’s leading on-demand events providers.
- **Online/Broadband**
World Wrestling Entertainment uses the Internet to promote its brands, create a community experience among fans, market and distribute its offline, online and mobile products, and sell online advertising. During the third quarter of 2008, its primary Web site, WWE.com, attracted an average of 14 million unique visitors from throughout the world.
- **E-Commerce**
The company’s online store, WWESHOP, generated a new one-year record of \$18.6 million in revenues in 2007. Over the past four years, the WWE has increased earnings more than 238 percent, offering the largest selection of official WWE merchandise in the world.
- **Home Video**
Through September 30, 2008, WWE Home Video had released 22 new titles in 2008, shipping approximately 3.2 million units, including more than 125 catalog titles. According to a leading video market

- research company, WWE had nine of the top 10 titles on the Sports DVD charts in 2008, and had a commanding No. 1 position and 43.6 percent market share in the Sports DVD category.
- **Magazine Publishing**
The company’s global men’s lifestyle publication, *WWE Magazine*, is ranked “Top 5” in retail revenue for the men’s category, with approximately \$7 million in annual newsstand sales. April 2008 saw the launch of *WWE Kids* magazine.
- **Music**
In addition to composing, producing and recording
- most of the music in its programming, WWE Music Group licenses commercial music for use across a variety of cable and pay-per-view programming needs. Recently, the company has worked with several big-name rock bands, weaving their music into WWE programming and Web content.
- **Mobile Services**
WWE Mobile has a convenient worldwide storefront that allows WWE fans to purchase wallpapers, ringtones and voicetones directly from WWE.com and from WWE.com through their mobile phones.

— Bruce Britt

marketing formula. “We use direct mail as a direct-response tactic, dropping one to two weeks before our PPV events,” Richards explains. “We work with our cable and satellite partners, because they have the lead list to target WWE fans, so we know who our fans are.”

In explaining how WWE leverages its cable/satellite partners in direct mail, Richards offers the example of the company’s marketing campaign for its 2008 WrestleMania XXIV extravaganza. To push the event, WWE sent out 8-1/2 by 5-1/2-inch tiered “inline mailers” featuring a feast of information about the festivities and the related promotions/events.

Included in the mailers was a 2008 WWE pay-per-view calendar, info about a co-branded sweepstakes in which fans could register to win a custom WrestleMania chopper and


details about WWE’s 24/7 On Demand gift-with-purchase promotion. WWE also provided space in the mailers for cable and satellite clients to hawk their own promotions. The mailers went out to 1.6 million fans in 24 states and three Canadian provinces in March 2008 — 10 days before WrestleMania XXIV.

“We had our clients pull lists of all WWE pay-per-view buyers, so whoever purchased PPV in the last couple of years were targeted,” Richards says. “We use our partner’s database so we can profile and look at the crossovers. We can target anyone who purchases WWE pay-per-view, and we can target ‘like’ fans. So we really rely on (the cable/satellite provider’s) database.”

Most indications suggest the campaign was a smackdown. Some 33,000 fans entered the chopper sweepstakes pitched in the inline

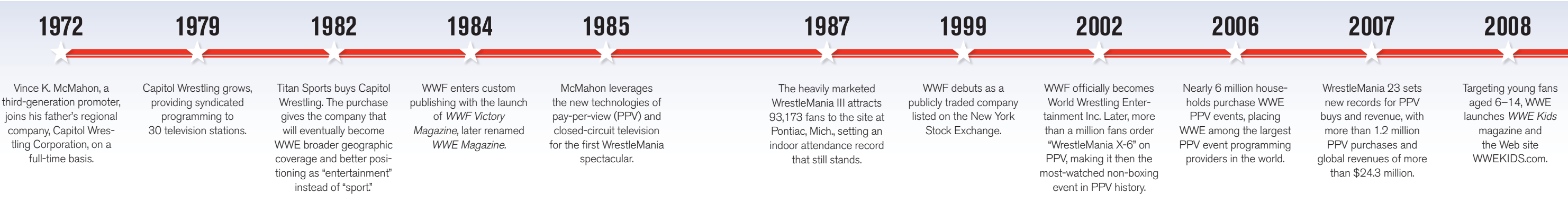
mailer, while another 5,000 made gift-with-purchase redemptions. WrestleMania XXIV itself attracted more than 1 million PPV buys. “Our clients cited that their systems reported as high as a 14-percent response rate from the direct mail,” Richards says.

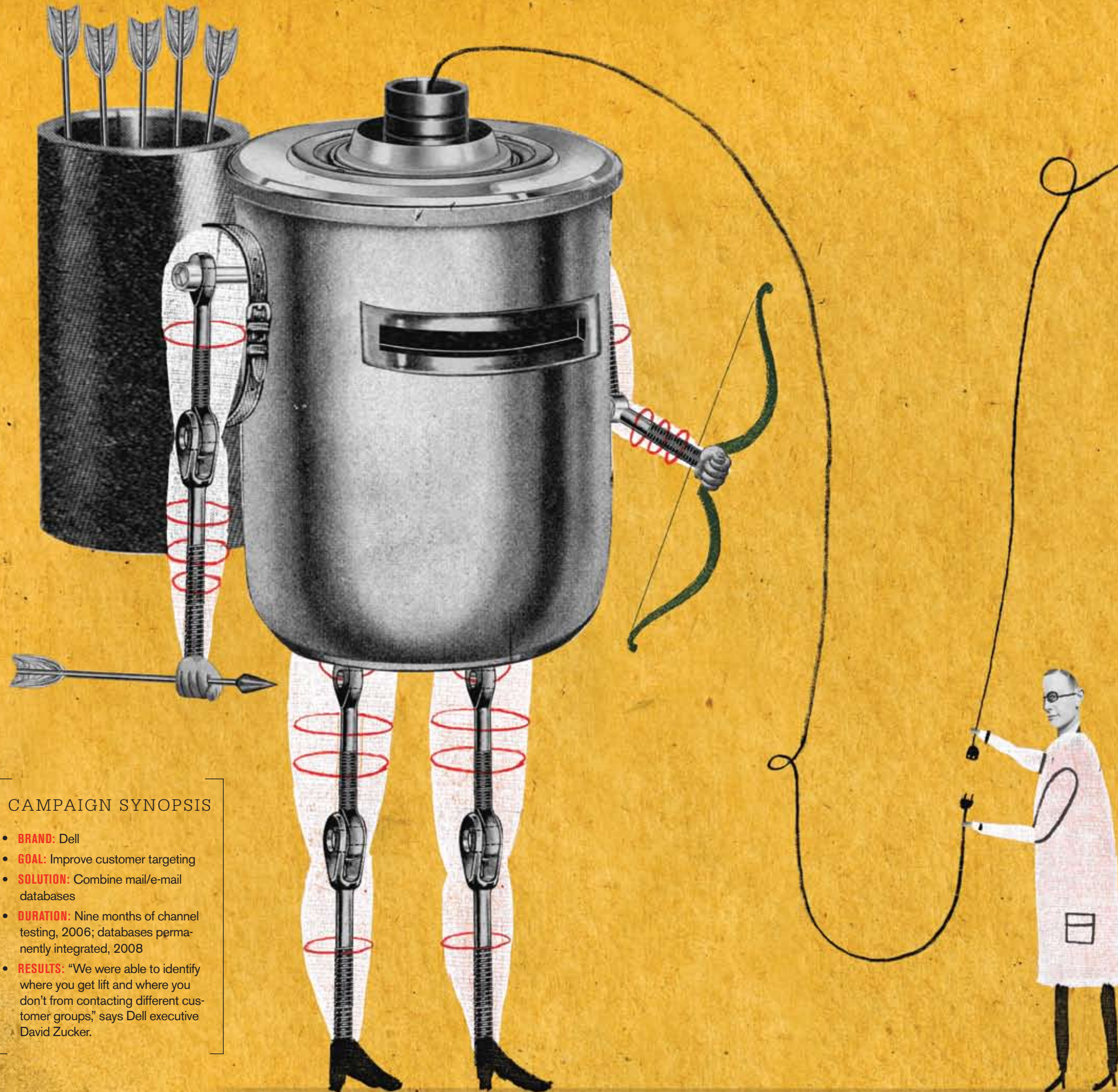
According to Richards, clients quoted the response rate as one of the higher ones they’ve ever seen from any niche event mail. But while the WrestleMania promotion underscores just how WWE uses direct mail to drum up awareness, the marketing world will forever remember 2008 as WWE’s “Year of the Fridge.”

“It’s longevity,” Richards says. “They’re going to keep these refrigerators in their office — and always keep our products top of mind. So it’s not just about HD. This is how we use direct mail. We go above and beyond.” 

BULKING UP

The WWE saga is a story of ambition, expansion and intelligently applied technology. Here, we chart great moments in WWE history.





REWIRING THE LINES OF COMMUNICATION

A computer maker discovers that linking e-mail and direct mail marketing is a challenge – but worth the effort.

BY MEG MITCHELL MOORE | ILLUSTRATIONS BY DAVID PLUNKERT

CAMPAIGN SYNOPSIS

- **BRAND:** Dell
- **GOAL:** Improve customer targeting
- **SOLUTION:** Combine mail/e-mail databases
- **DURATION:** Nine months of channel testing, 2006; databases permanently integrated, 2008
- **RESULTS:** "We were able to identify where you get lift and where you don't from contacting different customer groups," says Dell executive David Zucker.

Since the inception of e-mail marketing, countless businesses have tried to make this communications platform harmonize with direct mail. Bringing the two together certainly makes sense, but as many companies have discovered over the years, combining them is easier said than done.

"E-mail and direct mail are two different beasts," says Scott Testa, professor of marketing at St. Joseph's University in Philadelphia. "Managing the two together is hard. You need to mail effectively. And with e-mail, if you send too often, your spam complaints will jump, possibly getting your e-mails blocked or filtered."

Few companies embody the struggle to strike the right communications balance more than computer maker Dell. Even as a household name with 20 years of marketing experience under its Texas-sized belt, Dell only recently integrated its direct mail and e-mail marketing efforts, with great success.

But as recently as two years ago, the company still maintained separate databases for the two channels. “We were locally optimizing e-mail and direct mail, but we weren’t globally optimizing our communications with customers by putting them together,” says David Zucker, Dell director of global marketing analytics and CRM.

In 2006, Dell began wondering how bringing e-mail and direct mail under one roof could allow the company to wring more efficiency out of its marketing dollars and enable better customer targeting. “By putting the data together we could understand when we had an e-mail and a direct mail address. We could then start to test what customers were receptive to the different forms of communication and when to better optimize how we use each vehicle,” says Zucker.

Dell faced some considerable challenges to its integration plans. The first was the legacy marketing systems. “E-mail marketing started historically as a separate function — in a lot of cases it was closely associated with IT,” says Scott Cone, vice president and client group leader at Merkle Inc., a database-marketing agency based in Baltimore, which works with Dell.

The second challenge was metrics. The success of e-mail marketing has long been based on behavioral activity (did the customer click through to the site?) rather than revenue-producing activity (did the customer order from the catalog she received Tuesday?). So the metrics used to determine success in each medium have historically been quite different. And while those metrics are beginning to shift and coalesce, their differences still have the potential to stymie integration efforts.

A LOT OF COMPANIES JUST THINK, ‘DIRECT MAIL IS EXPENSIVE; I NEED TO FOCUS ON E-MAIL. BUT THEY DON’T TAKE THE TIME TO FIGURE OUT WHAT THEY’RE LEAVING BEHIND IF THEY DO THAT.’

— Scott Cone, VP and client group leader at Merkle Inc.

The third complicating factor is infrastructure. In many companies, separate vendors handle direct mail and e-mail marketing, so bringing them together involves complex negotiation and logistical maneuvering. And finally, there’s instinct. “A lot of companies just think, ‘Direct mail is expensive; I need to focus on e-mail,’” says Cone. “But they don’t take the time to figure out what they’re leaving behind if they do that.”

In Dell’s case, its longtime relationship with Merkle, which has handled the company’s direct mail database since 2000, was the key to its integration efforts. A separate vendor handled Dell’s e-mail database. “The e-mail vendor had the data, but we weren’t using it the way you’d expect or hope an advanced direct marketer would be using it, by tying it to offline data,” says Zucker.

So they set out to answer a few questions: Did they have overlap between the direct mail and e-mail databases? If so, how much? And by combining the two sets of customer data, could they more effectively reach each customer segment?

Try This at Home



1 GET BUY-IN. The first step is to make sure that senior management understands the importance and complexity of the integration process. Your supervisors might even mistakenly think you’ve already tried combining the two channels, have failed at it and need to be convinced not to do it again. “Senior executives often assume that you understand how e-mail and direct mail work together,” says Scott Cone, vice president and client group leader at Merkle.



2 REMOVE THE SILOS. In many organizations, the direct mail and e-mail functions exist separately, often in entirely different departments. Make your case to all affected parties and do what you can to bring the channels together organizationally.



3 TEST. Use the data that you derive from tests to manage the direct mail/e-mail integration process, says Cone. During the testing phase, measure the results from consumers receiving unsolicited e-mail against those from consumers receiving no e-mail at all.

E-mail and direct mail integration tips from database marketing agency Merkle Inc. **By Meg Mitchell Moore**



4 BE GREEN. Consumers are increasingly concerned about environmental issues. Let your integration efforts tell you when e-mail is more appropriate and when direct mail delivers better results.

5 LET THE CONSUMERS CHOOSE. Allow consumers to decide which channels they prefer: E-mail, direct mail, both, or neither. This not only keeps the end user happy — it also improves your ROI.



6 PREPARE FOR PHASE TWO. Once you’ve got your e-mail/direct mail act together, consider integrating those two channels with text messaging. “This is just going to get more complex,” says Cone.

TESTING, TESTING

Dell tested the channels over a nine-month period, during which Merkle performed an “ad hoc” integration of the direct mail and e-mail databases for existing and potential customers. The company also performed tests to determine the right mix of communications for each customer to receive. The tests combined customer segments and marketing vehicles, and they allowed Dell to modify and control the sequence of how it was contacting its customers.

So for a three-month period, for example, certain customers would receive only direct mail. Others from the same customer segment would receive only e-mail. Still others saw a combination of both. “So, we were able to identify where you get lift and where you don’t get lift from contacting different customer groups,” says Zucker. The tests also allowed Dell to discover the incremental impact of each vehicle. Merkle and Dell were able to rule out the problems of attribution — not knowing which marketing piece a customer was responding to — that plague many brand’s multichannel efforts.

Based on the test results, Merkle and Dell integrated the direct mail and e-mail databases for good in 2008. Now, employing the baseline metrics from the initial testing, Merkle can help Dell control the timing and the total quantity of messages each customer segment receives.

Having learned from the testing that certain customers respond better to different combinations of media, Dell has placed its customers into three “buckets”: direct mail only, e-mail only and both. This organization allows the company to better forecast its marketing needs a full year out. “We’re getting much better at planning out marketing communications by looking at those three buckets on an annual basis,” says Zucker.

Dell has also been forced to enhance its ability to focus campaigns jointly. “It used to be that when we pulled campaigns, e-mail and direct mail would be completely separate; even if it was a similar initiative, the two pieces wouldn’t really work together,” says Shirli Zelcer, senior manager of the quantitative solutions group at Merkle, which worked on the Dell integration.

Dell has tested sending e-mails to customers to alert them that a catalog is on the way. Some customers previously received frequent catalog mailings along with e-mails. “The testing identified that we don’t really have to do that — we only have to send one catalog per quarter to some customers, and we supplement that with e-mail,” says Zucker. For those customers, Dell has ramped up its e-mail marketing while focusing its direct mail dollars where they get the most results. “But other customers we have to send catalogs to on a pretty regular basis in order to get them to purchase,” says Zucker.

MOVING FORWARD

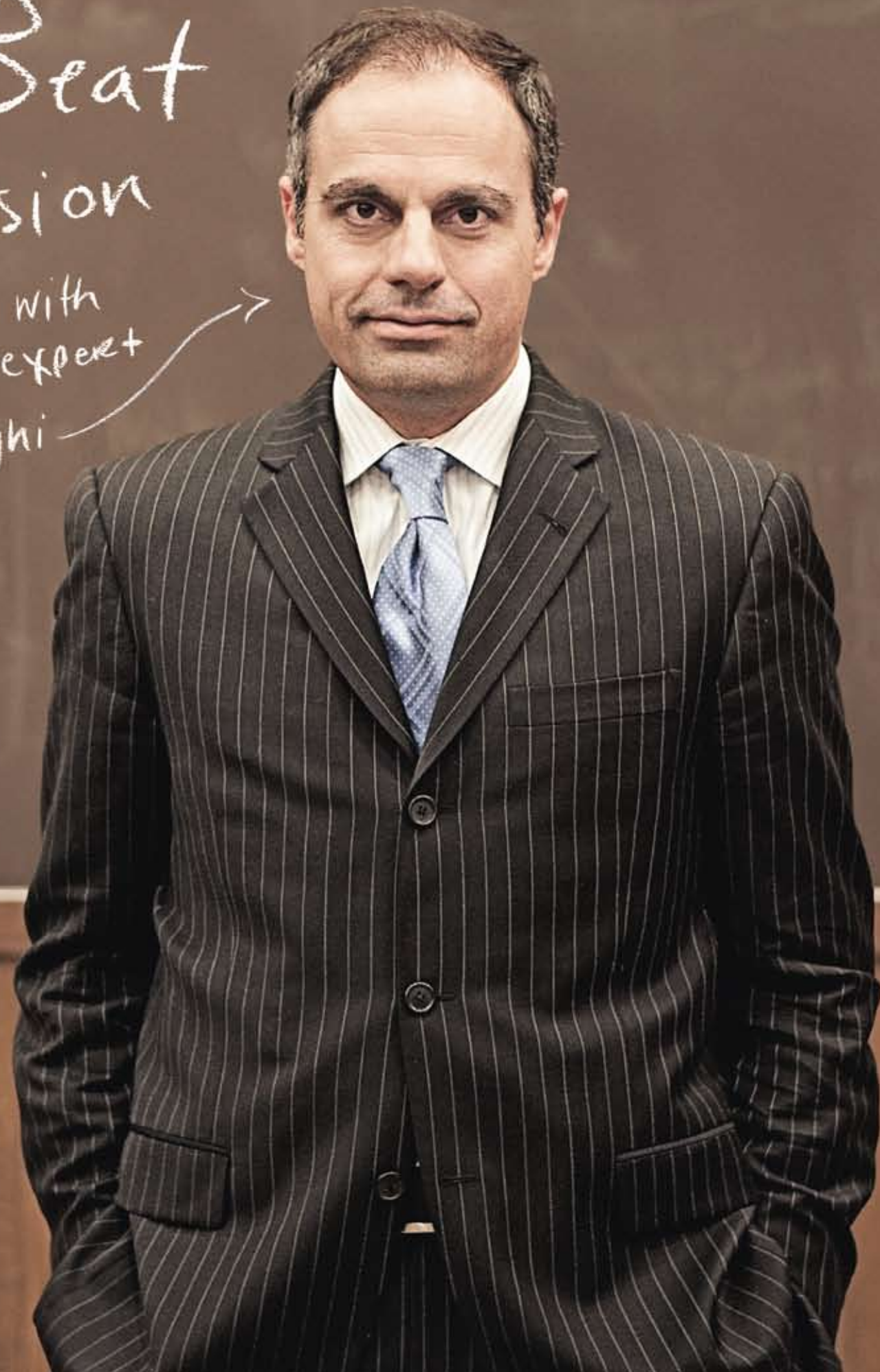
One of the most important lessons Dell has taken out of its integration project is that both direct mail and e-mail have an important place in the company’s marketing plans. “For most companies, including Dell, we find that a combination of e-mail and direct mail — especially for the best customers — is really the right thing to do,” says Cone.

And while some might expect e-mail to be the dominant driver in blended campaigns, experts contend that direct mail works better as the lead dog. “If anything,” says St. Joseph professor Testa, “because of some of the technology and demographics, direct mail may be even more effective than it’s ever been.”

How to Beat the Recession

An interview with
marketing expert
Andrew Razeghi →

By Natalie Engler
Photographs by Matt Barnes



THE SHAKY ECONOMY DOESN'T HAVE TO MEAN A DIRECT MARKETING RETREAT. AUTHOR AND LECTURER ANDREW RAZEGHI EXPLAINS WHY YOUR BRAND SHOULD ACT NOW TO PREVENT LOSING CUSTOMERS LATER.

The secret to flourishing in today's economic downturn is to challenge convention, according to marketing expert Andrew Razeghi, a lecturer at the Kellogg School of Management at Northwestern University.

In a recent paper, "Innovating through Recession: When the Going Gets Tough the Tough Innovate," Razeghi argues that recessions provide fertile ground for launching new businesses, developing disruptive new products and strengthening customer loyalty. Numerous high-profile name brands were born in the shadow of the Great Depression, he notes.

"Get creative," says Razeghi, who advises organizations on creativity and innovation. "Ideas are cheap. You don't have to spend money in order to solve problems. But you do need to spend time."

Razeghi, who is also author of *The Riddle: Where Ideas Come From and How to Have Better Ones*, spoke with *Deliver*® about the upside of a down economy and how direct marketers can benefit.

DELIVER: Your white paper contains many examples of companies that prospered by marketing new products during recessionary times. What do these companies have in common?

RAZEGHI: They focused on more than just cash flow during tough times. You need three things to innovate: ideas, talent and capital. In a downturn, there is almost an exclusive focus on capital, on hoarding cash. Although managing cash flow is important, successful recession-period innovators also continue to invest in research and development and marketing rather than put them on hold. And instead of choking off innovation, they listen to the market, invest in products for the long term, and keep in front of the customer.

DELIVER: So they don't cut back on marketing or communications?

RAZEGHI: On the contrary, they spend aggressively on these activities. In a recession, the worst thing you can

USE YOUR MUSE: Author and Northwestern University lecturer Andrew Razeghi urges major companies to increase their creativity rather than cut their marketing spend.

do is to hide — to cut off communications with customers. This is true for companies operating in the business-to-business environment as well as consumer-products companies. Customers are often skeptical, but they tend to be even more so during a recession. Fear creates focus: They wonder how you're doing. And they ask themselves, "Should I buy that product when its supplier might be out of business in six months?" Now is the time to increase communication and restore customers' confidence not only in the products you are selling, but also in the company behind those products.

DELIVER: Who is making noise now?

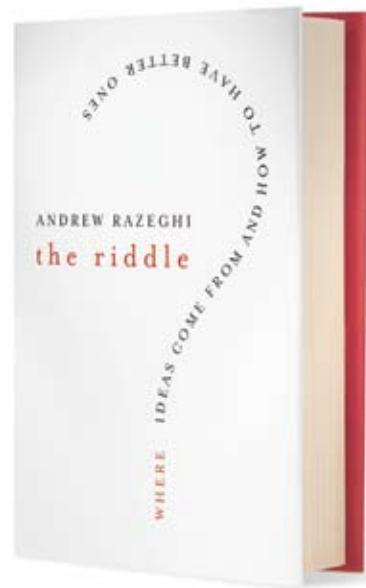
RAZEGHI: A good example right now is a very well-known investment company that's been producing effective, 30-second ads reassuring customers that the business has been through recessions before, and that it will get them through this one. On the other hand, one Japanese car manufacturer recently announced that it would not be attending the new car shows in either Chicago or Detroit, only to switch gears abruptly after U.S. dealers voiced their discontent with the announcement. The company has since said it will be attending both shows. What is interesting, however, is how the company "got creative" about solving the problem, which involved balancing fiscal responsibility to shareholders and keeping their dealer network happy. Their solution: Work with local dealers to help staff the show. Now, that's creativity at work. It's not about go or don't go. It's about finding a third way. Sometimes necessity is indeed the mother of invention.

DELIVER: In your paper "Innovating through Recession," you make the case that economic downturns are good times to break with the status quo. How can people turn direct marketing on its head?

RAZEGHI: Perhaps it's time to rethink the whole concept of direct mail and ask what is its purpose, where are we trying to get the piece to, what do we want people to do with it, and are there ways to better integrate it with the Web? A few years ago, one of my clients owned a patent for a technology that involved swiping a pen over the label on a direct mail piece and being taken directly to a Web site. Anything that saves a customer time or facilitates what people are doing already will always be relevant.

DELIVER: So this is really no time for marketers to hide their heads in the sand?

**DIRECT MAIL IS MORE PHYSICAL,
LESS DISPOSABLE AND MORE
SENSORY THAN DIGITAL MEDIA.
START WITH THESE BENEFITS AND
INNOVATE FROM THIS CORE IDEA.**



QUESTION AND ANSWERS: In *The Riddle*, Razeghi tries to help businesses understand the origins of brilliant ideas in order to increase corporate creativity.

Direct marketers have a chance to capitalize on this trust by making direct mail more compelling and innovative. For example, physical marketing touch points have a huge advantage when it comes to experiential marketing. Whether it's a food company sponsoring bus shelters in Chicago to promote stuffing mix, or product samples sent via direct mail, experiential marketing can be as compelling as digital media, if not more so, because it incorporates multiple sensory experiences. Physical product sampling, coincidentally, also happens to have very high conversion rates. Even in a recession, customers will continue to value those types of activities.

DELIVER: How else can mail make a difference?

RAZEGHI: I think there is also an opportunity right now for custom publishers to carve out a new niche by becoming a one-stop-shop for small retailers to help promote private-label products, which do well in economic downturns. Private label products also build the retailer brand while increasing profits. Custom publishers could develop a service allowing retailers to log on, create a custom piece, and mail it out to a target audience, similar to the way authors use online services to self-publish books. [a](#)

RAZEGHI: Now is the time to get back to your knitting. Direct marketers need to play to their strengths and rethink how they may be able to translate those strengths into new opportunities. Direct mail is more physical, less disposable and more sensory than digital media. Start with these benefits and innovate from this core idea.

As marketers continue to clamor for attention, we know that sensory branding will grow increasingly relevant to help cut through the clutter. Direct mail is perhaps the best vehicle for distributing all of a brand's senses. Whether you're a car company working to promote that "new car smell" or a coffee roaster coming out with your "Christmas blend," get creative about the benefits of sensory marketing and direct mail's role in helping make your case to consumers.

DELIVER: Agreed. But the push is increasingly toward using the digital space — social networks, e-mail, blogs, etc. Given this growing reliance on the Web, what are the future implications for direct mail?

RAZEGHI: It's been my experience that people still trust what they read on paper much more than they trust what they see in digital media.



Whether you're a car company coming out with that
"new car smell" or a coffee roaster, get creative about
the benefits of sensory marketing and direct mail's role in
helping make your case to consumers.



CAMPAIGN SYNOPSIS

- **NAME OF CAMPAIGN:** "We Major in Careers."TM
- **OBJECTIVES:** Increase awareness of DeVry as a fully accredited university; boost student enrollment
- **VARIOUS MEDIA USED:** Direct mail, print, TV, radio, outdoor, Web
- **LENGTH OF CAMPAIGN:** Initial phase of campaign extended from January 2008 to June 2008.
- **NUMBER OF PIECES MAILED:** 1.8 million (initial phase)
- **ROI OR RESPONSE RATES:** DeVry senior director of marketing Lisa Iannuzzelli reports that enrollments have increased, which she partly attributes to the campaign.

BOLD SCHOOL

In the midst of celebrating the 75th anniversary of DeVry University during the 2006–2007 school year, officials at the university took stock of its recent history and, while they found good cause to uncork the bubbly, they also found reasons for concern.

Chief among them was that, despite enrollment of more than 65,000 students at its 92 locations throughout the United States and Canada, Illinois-based DeVry still had something of an image problem: The school was combating the misconception that it is a technical/vocational school, rather than the fully accredited university it really is. DeVry also wanted to increase its market share within the high-stakes adult education space. "We're competing against the 800-pound gorilla," says Lisa Iannuzzelli, the DeVry University senior director of marketing, referring to the heavily marketed Arizona university noted for its online offerings. "Typically, they're even more aggressive in their marketing than we are. Then there's also competition from all the local state schools and colleges. (It's) a challenge."

In a bid to polish its image and promote its value, DeVry joined with a Chicago-based brand builder to craft a new, integrated marketing campaign complete with a punchy slogan — "We major in careers" — emphasizing the university's competitive advantage. At the center of the campaign was DeVry's "Real Stories" series — a string of testimonials from happily employed DeVry grads, students and faculty.

BY BRUCE BRITT | 88

"We felt that the best way for people to learn about DeVry, and hear about how people can get careers, was from our students, alumni, employers and faculty," Iannuzzelli says. "That has become a big focus, letting those people be our spokesperson and tell our story for us."

A major player in direct marketing, the school refreshed its mail campaign considerably. First, the university printed branded mailing envelopes featuring the red/royal blue color scheme of the DeVry Web site. The mailings gave continuity to messages being transmitted online.

Next, the university whipped up standard format pitch letters that included an interactive questionnaire embossed with the school's "We major in careers" tag line. The letter touted findings that suggest that the best-paying, fastest-growing jobs today are in business, engineering and applied sciences. "Just what we teach at DeVry," the letter effused before delivering the facts about DeVry's 90-percent grad employment rate.

The accompanying questionnaire posed four questions, including one that asked directly, "Would you like to make \$30,000 to \$46,000 right out of school?"

Explains Iannuzzelli: "Typically, we get consumers interested in learning more about DeVry, then we get them to provide us with contact information. Our recruiters will follow up with them, tell them more about our offerings, and work them through the admissions process if they're interested."

Though the pitch letters would be delivered to existing consumers in DeVry's mailing database, the school also

employed the assistance of an independent source. “We work with a list broker who selects the list for us,” says Iannuzzelli. “It’s various lists that we feel have our target audience.”

Once the pitch mailers were set to go, DeVry cast its net wide. The university launched a series of nationwide mailings in January 2008, with subsequent deliveries being implemented in February, April and June. By the arrival of summer 2008, DeVry had circulated more than 1.8 million pieces of direct mail. “We blanketed the country, but we heavily focused on areas where we have a physical location,” explains Iannuzzelli. Like the questionnaire, all the pieces were emblazoned with the “We major in careers” tag line.

But direct mail was just one piece of DeVry’s massive campaign puzzle. The university created five television ads, including a self-styled “anthem spot” featuring a Utopian variety of students discussing their DeVry experiences. Four additional TV spots showcased alumni talking up DeVry’s business, degree completion, game and simulation, and Web graphic design programs. “We had offers in our TV ads, like our ‘DeVry’s Guide to 49 Hot Careers’ booklet, that we gave out to prospective students,” Iannuzzelli says.

The university targeted young men by placing ads in edgy, male-oriented “lad books,” in eclectic music magazines and in computer publications. To lure older women, DeVry took out ads in lifestyle, health and fashion magazines.

For the print phase of the campaign, DeVry appealed to consumers across all kinds of demographic lines. In one ad, a 32-year-old female DeVry grad explains how her recent business administration degree eased her entry into a human resources management career. In another, a 38-year-old mother touts DeVry’s financial aid department, telling readers “even with five kids, you can afford to go to college.” Still another print piece features a 26-year-old man relating his experience in the school’s gaming and simulation program. “Womb to tomb, I’ll be a gamer ’til I die,” he gushes with convincing hip-hop bravado. In fine-print copy in all the ads, DeVry offers its grad employment stats and accreditation info.

Radio spots and billboards aired in specific markets echoed the “we

major in careers” message. On DeVry’s updated Web site, the same “careers” tag line was showcased in a banner, just below the university’s logo. A special, consumer-targeted URL (devrystories.com/shape) features a 25-second video presentation with alumni touting the school’s virtues. Finally, to reap maximum bang from its Internet buck, DeVry updated its external Internet promotions, including banner ads and paid search.

In all, the “Careers/Real Stories” tandem underscored DeVry’s curricular and competitive strengths while reflecting the racial, gender and age diversity of the university’s student population. “We pride ourselves on the fact that we don’t focus on a specific ethnic group,” Iannuzzelli says. “We serve all groups, and we like to have that represented in our ads.”

The decision to reach out to a broad audience was driven by marketers’ recognition that DeVry boasts an uncommonly diverse student body. According to the most recent stats, 35 percent of DeVry’s student population ranges from ages 18 to 24. Meanwhile, a whopping 65 percent of students are 25 and older. So the challenge wasn’t simply to reach all these aspiring college grads but to somehow unite their disparate life’s goals under a common banner.

DeVry realized that all segments of its student population shared a common goal. “In both cases, the career is very important and an integral part of what they’re looking for,” Iannuzzelli says.

The mail campaign succeeded largely because DeVry maintains a serious commitment to direct mail as a communications channel. During her four-year tenure as DeVry’s marketing lead, Iannuzzelli has made direct mail an integral part of the school’s outreach strategy, allowing DeVry to grow its inquiry database. “Keeping the dialogue going with current inquiries is where we find the most success with direct mail,” Iannuzzelli says. “We take our inquiries that a recruiter hasn’t been in contact with, and remarket to those inquiries.”

The execution of the campaign was successful also because the university boasts a high rate of gainfully employed grads, many with testimonials ideal for the school’s

Higher Earning

In their ongoing competition for tech-savvy recruits, both for-profit and traditional universities look to marketing for an edge. **By Charlotte Huff**

When it comes to marketing themselves to potential students, traditional academic schools and for-profit universities differ in their approaches, from the databases they mine for promising prospects to the design of the campaigns themselves. But one thing they share is the desire to become more targeted in their approach, to eliminate waste, and to maximize their return. In other words, they’re just like you.

Many factors influence the educational marketing process, including how frequently the school needs to fill classrooms, says Lyle Kraft, executive vice president of sales and marketing for PlattForm Advertising, a Kansas City-based agency. For-profit schools, for example, may recruit a fresh crop of students every few months, while more traditional colleges and universities may focus the bulk of their marketing energy — and

financial resources — on each annual wave of high-school seniors.

Once schools identify their preferred students, they can tailor letters, brochures and other direct mail pieces to appeal to those students’ passions. For-profit schools might send more direct mail, but take more steps to limit cost per piece, Kraft says. They are more likely to develop 8 ½ x 11 letter packages, rather than, say, glossy brochures. Then they can personalize those letters by switching out paragraphs and focusing on areas of study, such as health or auto-related classes, which might be more likely to interest recipients based on their age, gender and other demographic information.

A traditional college or university might invest more not just by creating glossy brochures, but also by switching out photographs and micro-tailoring the language,

Kraft says. Using variable digital printing, schools can use photographs from the science department, for example, if testing-service data reveal that a particular student is passionate about chemistry.

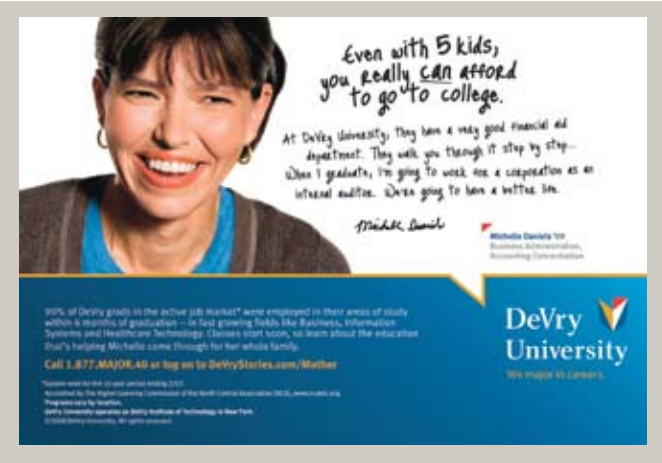
Along with the layouts and targeted language, the brochures can incorporate interactive components to appeal to tech-savvy students. Kraft describes one recent campaign PlattForm developed for a Texas state university involving 80,000 brochures. Mailed to high school seniors living within a 100-mile radius of the main campus, the brochures included a response card on which students could check off their interests. Students could also use an enclosed PIN code to access personalized profiles online and virtually update their preferences, from academics to sports. “When they submit that information, it instantly goes back to the school as a lead,” Kraft says.


new campaign. System-wide, 92 percent of students who graduated from DeVry in June and October 2007 and February 2008 and who were seeking work were employed in their fields of study within six months of graduation.

The graduates from June and October 2007 and February 2008 who were in the active job market were employed at an average annual salary of \$44,000. Even more impressive, this 90-percent graduate employment rate has held steady since 1975. “We had this wonderful statistic that we really felt could differentiate us in this crowded, competitive space,” says Iannuzzelli.

Iannuzzelli says it’s too early to fully gauge the effectiveness of the “Careers” branding campaign, as the university has no quantifying scientific evidence. But one clue strongly suggests the campaign is working. “Enrollments were up quite a bit from prior,” Iannuzzelli says. “We feel that was in part due to the campaign. We track all of our media and we have historic information about performance, so our overall inquiry volume has been very strong. We feel that this campaign is generating the results we expected.”

Iannuzzelli says that the “Careers” trademark and campaign will remain in effect for an indeterminate length of time, or until flat-lining enrollments suggest the new promotion isn’t working. But she says this public image revamp has already been a learning experience.



“I think we came away with the knowledge that we do have very distinct targets — the young student and the adult student,” Iannuzzelli says. “Our goal with this campaign was to try and find a campaign that really resonates with both of these targets. We felt that ‘We major in careers’ really did that. That’s something that we can hang our hats on.” 

Sold on Ice

A marketing chief for the NHL explains how direct mail assists the hockey league in hitting its goals.

Interview by Lara Jensen | Photograph by Derek Blagg

Sports fans can access content from any number of media outlets these days, so it can take some fancy maneuvering by marketers to target them effectively. Thus far, the National Hockey League has done pretty well keeping its fans satisfied. For instance, attendance at games has increased by about 1.2 percent this season — and now rivals attendance figures for pro basketball games in the United States. Meanwhile, NHL revenue, already more than \$2.6 billion, is expected to rise by 6 percent during the season.

Perry Cooper, senior vice president of digital and direct marketing at the National Hockey League, works hard to keep NHL rinks filled. Recently, he crafted a strategy to gather crucial data from the league's various consumer touch points to create better-targeted communications. Direct mail, including the league's merchandise catalog, anchors these efforts.

Cooper talked recently with *Deliver*® about why his strategy is scoring with fans.

DELIVER: How is the NHL's direct marketing program evolving, especially in light of current economic conditions?

COOPER: Our direct program is entirely new, and while this wasn't specifically in response to the economy, it is helping us weather the downturn better than might be expected. We have a brand-new direct marketing team that is focused on monetizing our customer engagements across all touch points, including our NHL Center Ice network and Shop NHL and live-streaming games on NHL.com.

A big part of the picture is a new relational database that will capture transactional data across many of these NHL businesses. (The database was slated to launch in January.) Previously, the NHL had no defined strategy to capture customer data or to use this information to cultivate relationships. The goal is to be able to customize as much consumer-facing content as possible.

Already, the results from several tests of targeted communications and from our new, more immersive Web site have been impressive. We're seeing growth across all of our businesses. Part of this is because sports fans are resilient, meaning they still respond to focused marketing during an economic downturn. But also, we've been "under-penetrated" until recently. Our direct marketing efforts have put us in a position to be successful right now. In a better economy, we'd be seeing even more of an upturn.

DELIVER: Where does mail fit into this new cross-channel marketing initiative?

COOPER: Direct mail is central to our efforts to go deeper into analytics. By looking at data from recency-frequency-monetary value analyses, the multi-source penetration of customers and whether someone is a displaced fan — meaning they don't

One of our big goals is ensuring that new customers are exposed to our entire portfolio of offerings. So when someone new is acquired through Shop.NHL.com, for example, we will send him a targeted catalog when this is appropriate. Having a reservoir of names you can use in as many places as possible makes any business successful.



STICK FIGURES: Perry Cooper, senior VP of digital and direct marketing for the NHL, has helped the league see a 1.2-percent boost in attendance and \$2.6 billion in revenue.

live in the state of the team they are a fan of — we believe we can be successful in direct mail.

Having one central repository of customer data, for example, will make it easier to determine the favorite team of our fans. We recently tested a merchandise catalog customized to feature the favorite team of the recipient on the cover. Overall, the results for the customized catalogs were at least 35 percent better than with a generic cover.

DELIVER: What does direct mail do better than the NHL's other marketing efforts?

COOPER: As nice as the Web is, there is still a big desire among consumers to receive something tangible. We have a very loyal audience that wants to sit down and look at our catalog at their leisure. A lot of those people then go to the Web.

When we're doing a good job of targeting, the ROI on direct mail is terrific. Which is one reason why we will be increasing the circulation of our catalog by 20 percent to 30 percent in 2009 and delivering a targeted message to more than half of the names.

One of our goals is ensuring that new customers are exposed to our entire portfolio of offerings. So when someone new is acquired through Shop.NHL.com, for example, we will turn around and send him a targeted catalog when this is appropriate. Having a reservoir of names that you can use in as many places as possible is what makes any business successful.

DELIVER: Do you have a favorite piece of direct mail that you've personally received?

COOPER: I've always been a fan of what Land's End does. Really being able to tell a story and romance a product is something the brand has done well over time. This is something we aspire to do around the right products.

Also, I recently received an insert card from an entertainment magazine asking me to subscribe. I'd been feeling unable to connect with entertainment as much as I'd like. Plus, the price was great and the creative was clever. There was a big, glossy image that hit on all themes in the magazine — music, movies, books and popular culture. That's really all you need to do: Hit the benefits, hit them hard and make sure the visuals play off of that.

DELIVER: Do you have a direct mailer that you hold onto for some reason?

COOPER: I grew up a big sports fan, so I like sports nostalgia. There's this direct mail piece from a football helmet maker that showcases collectible mini helmets from the 1970s, and I think it is great. The company must have gotten my name from some football list, but other than that it's not a very targeted piece. Still, the uniqueness of the helmets and the nostalgia attached to them takes me back to a moment in time, which is why I keep the piece. [Q](#)